

THE WHEELING WORLD

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THE WHEELING WORLD.

A Weekly Survey.

DICK TURPIN'S RANDOM RECORDS.

THE problem which has of late been exercising the minds of most wheelmen is how not to puncture. Under the circumstances it has proved a difficult problem, for the roads have been in a worse state than for years. The prolonged dry weather has made some of them so loose that I fear they will remain in a bad way throughout the Season, although in the case of others the rain during the last two or three days has already effected a decided improvement. Worst of all has been the upper road to Arundel, particularly between Patching Pond and Hammerpot Hill, a very bad piece which no modest rainfall would suffice to put in order.

Yes, punctures were plentiful; I have seen four or five wayside repairing operations being performed in the course of a spin to Horsham and back on two separate occasions just lately, and on each occasion I also managed to add a couple of punctures to my own fairly large collection.

Ben Rogers, of the Excelsior C.C., holds the puncture record, I believe. On a spin home from Chichester last week he had no less than nine repairs to execute upon one tyre. And even then it leaked!

Another local wheelman punctured before he had passed through Broadwater when starting out for a ride. He gave up the unequal combat and returned home with the avowed intention of stabling his steed until surfaces improve. Presumably, however, his courage has since revived, as I saw the cautious one again braving the perils of the flint-strewn highways a few days later.

But everything has its compensations, and the bad roads provided opportunities for unusual sport. It was rare fun to start out on a ride and keep going till the usual puncture happened, then repair and come home.

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The wheelman had no idea how far he might get and the element of uncertainty lent the pursuit a great charm. And with really good luck one could get a fair run for an hour or so—if the party was not too numerous.

With a fellow Excelsiorite I had travelled to within three miles of Chichester the other day before a puncture—which only made four holes in the tyre!—proclaimed that we had reached our turning point. So we obediently repaired and returned.

A local wheelman was more than pleased one day last week to reflect that he had insured his machine. A runaway horse and cart had crashed into the bicycle, which had been left at the edge of the pavement, with the result that only a bent and twisted wreck of what had a minute previously been a nearly new machine remained.

As no claim seems to lay against owners of vehicles which accidentally damage unattended bicycles, the moral of the story seems to be, insure your bicycle before leaving it unattended.

The Whit-Monday race meeting of the Excelsior Club promises to be a most interesting display and is full of variety. A couple of open bicycle handicaps and a five miles scratch bicycle race; running, walking and cycling handicaps for club members, and a relay race between teams from Worthing Schools, should make a good programme.

But the Club decided to improve upon this and enlisted the 18th Company of the Army Service Corps who, besides giving the wagon dismantling and mounting display, which they carried out with so much success at the Military Tournament at the Agricultural Hall last year, will exhibit their prowess at wrestling on horseback, whilst the band of the second battalion of the Lincolnshires will put the finishing touch to a really highgrade programme.

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Such enterprise should command success, and I trust the Club will enjoy the traditional Excelsior C. C. weather, in which case a big gate will doubtless reward them.

A day or two ago a glittering cavalcade of wheelmen sped through Findon in splendour and pride; the sunlight glinted upon the brightly polished machines and dazzled the eyes of all beholders, its brilliance being only rivalled by the radiant smiles of the happy unsuspecting riders.

A dog appeared upon the scene!

The leader of the procession dodged the beast successfully, and the followers succeeded in doing the same. But, alas, they failed to dodge each other, and whilst three gallant knights of the pedal bit the dust, a new Don Quixote charged full tilt into the hedge!

I am glad to say none of them were hurt seriously; they were tough Excelsiorites, and a wash and brush up soon put them right. Indeed, my only reason for not publishing a casualty list is that the first concern of one of the victims was to caution his fellow-sufferers against allowing information of the catastrophe to reach the news-gathering ears of

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